

I run an interpreter referral agency in New York City. Many deaf/hard of hearing people stop by my office and use the Video Relay Services (VRS). I see the benefit VRS provides to deaf/hard of hearing sign language users. It gives them a sense of independence and comfort to use sign language. As you know, most deaf/hard of hearing people graduate with a 4th grade reading level. So many prefer to use sign language while using relay services.

I strongly suggest keeping VRS available to the deaf/hard of hearing population. There are about 2 million and maybe more people that use sign language based on statistics from the US Department of Education.

More training to hire qualified skilled sign language interpreters is needed as well as the quality of services to be maintained.